

we do not have a commitment yet on the investment of resources and the Federal Government and the Senate and the House living up to our commitment to children and education in the country.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I now withdraw the pending motion to proceed to S. 149.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has that right. The motion is withdrawn.

#### BETTER EDUCATION FOR STUDENTS AND TEACHERS ACT—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. LOTT. I now move to proceed to S. 1, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

I say to the Senator from Minnesota, there have been many days of negotiation. A lot of progress has been made. Everybody acknowledges that. But this bill should have been taken up in March. Now here we are almost in May and we are still negotiating. If we are going to have everything wrapped up before it ever comes to the floor of the Senate, there would not be much for the Senate to do around here.

Ordinarily, you get as much of an agreement as you can, get a bill reported out, and bring it to the floor. Negotiations are not going to end. They are going to continue. But on some of them we are not going to be able to reach an agreement.

I say to my colleague, in a State that is trying to improve education, and, again, as a son of a schoolteacher, if just money would solve the problem, we would have a higher quality of education in America than we do today.

We have spent well over \$130 billion over the past several years for the title I program. I don't want to demean that program. It has done some good and can do more good, if we give a little more flexibility at the local level where the money can be used, where it may be used differently in Minnesota than it would be in Texas, give a little flexibility to make sure you are addressing the needs of those title I children in an appropriate way.

But just money is not enough. We have to have some real reforms. Money is part of it. I admit that. The President has asked for more money for the reading program. The President has indicated he supports more funding for title I and for IDEA and for bilingual education.

We are making progress. He is moving in the right direction. But I don't know if we can ever come up with enough money in this area or a lot of the other areas to suit every Senator. They can always find some way—it is easy—to say “give me more.”

One of the reasons we ought to have tax relief is to let the people keep a lit-

tle bit more of their money to help the children with their needs. That is why I think we ought to double the child tax credit; let the parents get more of the benefit of their money to help their children with their needs. Let them decide if they need a little tutoring, if they need a computer, whatever it may be.

One of the reasons parents can't always do what they need for their own children is that they don't get to keep enough of the money they earn. Why in the world would we take from the mouths of labor the bread that they have earned? That is a quote from Thomas Jefferson—a great line.

At any rate, some Senators are adamant about objecting to proceeding to the education bill. I think that is a mistake. I think we ought to move forward. I suspect that some of the amendments that would be offered—and maybe the Senator from Minnesota would support and I would oppose—probably will pass. What are they worried about? We can bring this to a satisfactory conclusion that would be good for everybody. This is a win-win opportunity. Let's not blow it.

#### CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk to the pending motion to proceed so that we can get under way. I have let the Senate basically mark time now for the last week without achieving any real progress or closing the negotiations. I think it is time we guarantee that we can get on the bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BENNETT). The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

#### CLOTURE MOTION

We the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 23, S. 1, an original bill to extend programs and activities under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965:

Trent Lott, Jim Jeffords, Bill Frist, Rick Santorum, Kay Bailey Hutchison, Don Nickles, Tim Hutchinson, Strom Thurmond, Frank Murkowski, Pat Roberts, Sam Brownback, Jeff Sessions, Mike Crapo, Judd Gregg, Susan Collins, and Jesse Helms.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I have consulted with Senator DASCHLE and advised him that I would be filing cloture. This is not a surprise on his part. I know Senator KENNEDY was aware of it. I am sorry he was not on the floor because he has been working very hard doing a good job.

Under the rules, this vote then would occur on Tuesday. I ask unanimous consent that this cloture vote occur at 9:30 a.m. on Tuesday and that the mandatory quorum under rule XXII be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there now be a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### REPORT ON FOREIGN TRAVEL

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, I want to make a statement on a recent trip I have made to the Mideast. I want to alert my colleagues to the fact that beyond what is available in the news media, the situation in the Mideast is so serious it is really hard to describe. The concern I have is that the violence is likely to move beyond the borders of Israel where Hamas and Islamic Jihad may be targeting other installations, perhaps even U.S. installations.

I had an opportunity to talk with the Israeli leaders, including Prime Minister Sharon, who has the understandable position that he is not going to negotiate for peace until the violence has ended.

I had an opportunity to talk with Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat, who makes representations which simply are not true. Arafat makes the contention that he has issued an unequivocal edict for the Palestinians to cease the violence, citing as an example a speech he made at the Arab summit. When that speech is examined, it is so conditional as to be meaningless.

We had an opportunity to travel as well to Damascus where conversations were held with Foreign Minister Shara.

The situation between Israel and Syria is very tense. Israel retaliated against a Syrian radar installation because of the Hezbollah attacks against Israel from southern Lebanon. Hezbollah being backed by Iran with the concurrence of Syria.

The trip I made occurred during the past Easter recess, and I will describe it in some detail in the course of this floor statement.

Upon coming back to the United States, I have written to the President urging him to appoint a special representative in the Mideast, just as that had been the practice going back to the days when Henry Kissinger shuttled for President Nixon, special envoys being appointed by President Jimmy Carter, President Ronald Reagan, President George H. W. Bush, and President Bill Clinton.

Mr. President, from April 7 to April 21, we traveled from New York City to London, Florence, Ashkelon, Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, Cairo, Damascus, Beirut, Souda Bay, Crete, and Rome en route to Philadelphia.

In London, we met at the British Ministry of Defense with Ian Lee, the Director of the NATO and European Security Policy Department, and Deputy Director, A. D. Richards. The meeting touched on a range of issues. Among those were President Bush's position on missile defense, the British outreach to rogue nations, the viability of NATO absent a Soviet threat, plans for the proposed European defense force, and the British thoughts on the War Crimes Tribunal and the International Court.

Mr. Lee stated that the British reaction to President Bush's position on Missile Defense and its effect on the ABM Treaty was one of general support. They have an appreciation for the risks and agree with the United States on the threats. However, they are waiting to see what the actual proposal would be.

Mr. Lee stated that the United Kingdom was at a different stage than the United States in regards to its relation with several rogue nations. Its mission in Iran is moving toward having an ambassador, while it continues an effort to establish diplomatic ties to Libya.

I next met with Mr. Emrys Jones Parry, the Political Director and Deputy Undersecretary of State for the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. Also attending was Mr. Jonathan Darby, the U.S. Desk Officer, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, and Mr. Mort Dworken, the *Chargé d'Affaires* at the American Embassy.

When questioned about the proposed European Defense Force, Mr. Parry offered insight as to why Mr. Blair, who is a strong supporter of NATO, had come out in favor of an European defense force. According to Mr. Parry, Mr. Blair apparently believes that by putting a European flag on the force structure, European nations will be more likely to put money into it as well as spend the money on what they should in a NATO context.

Mr. Parry noted the idea of a European defense force has been around since 1952. He said it is not designed to remove the U.S. from the theater, but make it more likely to have the U.S. there because the Europeans would be pulling more of their own weight.

On the issue of the International Criminal Court, Mr. Parry stated that the U.K. is generally in favor of it. It believes there is a need for a forum to hold those accountable who would otherwise escape justice because of a lack of interest in their home jurisdiction. He was surprised when I told him that War Crimes Tribunal Prosecutor Carla Del Ponte was thinking of indicting General Wesley Clarke and other NATO officers for targeting civilians and for recklessly endangering them in targeting military objectives. Mr. Parry said it was his understanding that British troops could not come under indictment because of provisions that the

United Kingdom would take care of its own.

When I asked why we are putting so much into NATO in light of the loss of the Soviet threat, Mr. Parry replied that NATO's actions in Kosovo show that it is still necessary.

Our conversation then turned to the U.K.'s actions with Iran and Iraq. Mr. Parry noted that Britain was looking to keep a relationship open with the nations, and then if firm action was later required, the relationship could be adjusted accordingly.

I then asked Mr. Parry if the Europeans might eventually be on board the idea of missile defense. He responded that the assumption in Britain was the United States would go ahead and deploy a missile defense system, if it would work. The British position is that they will do what is necessary to ensure its success, but would like it to be "arranged in such a manner as to generate greater solidarity on the issue."

We then had substantive discussions in a working tea with the Baroness Scotland of Asthal QC, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign & Commonwealth Affairs with ministerial duties including North America. Over tea at the House of Lords, we discussed the American/British relationship. She also described her background and how she came to be in the House of Lords.

After having tea in the House of Lords, we then walked across Parliament to the House of Commons Central Lobby, where I was met by the Rt. Hon. Geoffrey Johnson Smith, MP, with whom I had a wide ranging discussion of issues. Smith and I had debated in November 1949 when he represented Oxford and I was on the Penn team.

Later that same day, we met with the country team headed by Mort Dworken, *Chargé d'Affaires*, who briefed us on the latest information regarding foot and mouth disease, fallout from the Administration's position on the Kyoto Accords, European security policy and the status of US/British relations.

In attendance were Mort Dworken, *Chargé d'Affaires*; Tom Hamby, Foreign Agriculture Minister-Counselor with the U.S. Department of Agriculture; Ed Kaska, Economic Affairs Officer; Captain Stu Barnett, USN, Defense Attaché; and Sonya Tsiros, Political Officer.

We initially asked about the current status of the foot and mouth epidemic and were told the disease was still not under control. The British Government was undertaking a massive control program to try and isolate the virus. This included the slaughter of over 1 million head of livestock with another half million yet to be killed. In addition, the government was restricting movement in the countryside including the closure of such historic sites as Stonehenge.

Tom Hamby, from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, noted that the U.S. currently has sixty veterinarians in the country both to help as well as become educated on successful ways to combat the disease. He described the effort much like a military campaign so that if the virus gets to the U.S., we will have people trained and on the ground to fight it.

We inquired into the political and economic effect of the disease and found that both had been affected. Prime Minister Blair postponed the national elections until June 27th due to the severity of the disease. Economically, the disease had yet to show its full weight. Although the UK has less than 2% of its Gross Domestic Product in agriculture, the closure of the English countryside had a clear economic affect in regards to tourism. At the time, there was no definitive number on the economic impact.

Early the next morning, we traveled to Florence, Italy where our first meeting was with a trio of lawyers with the famed Ferragamo family businesses to discuss trademark protection. During the meeting, we were told that the majority of Ferragamo products which are illegally copied originate in Asia. We asked how counterfeiting was detected, and whether there were any trouble in distinguishing the quality between counterfeit and non-counterfeit goods. The answer was yes, there often is a difference in the quality of the leather and accessories. But that is not always the case. Now counterfeits can often be of a very good quality, and be very difficult to differentiate.

We were surprised that the Italian government doesn't do more to stop this form of theft, especially since so many of the top designers are from Italy, and asked how much litigation they are involved in to protect the Ferragamo name. Most litigation, it turns out, is of a civil nature and is injunctive in nature. Even though most actions are civil, it is very difficult to get damages based upon the design of Italian law.

As for criminal actions, it is recognized as a form of larceny, but the criminal courts consider it to be of nominal value and not as important as other crimes. We were told that in one case often cited by the courts, a customer went to buy a "Ferragamo" purse and paid a low price for it. The court reasoned that since the price was so low, the purchaser had to know it wasn't a real Ferragamo purse, and therefore no fraud occurred. I commented that by prosecuting a few white-collar crimes, a real deterrent effect could be achieved.

Later that day, we discussed a wide range of US/Italian/European issues over lunch with Consul General Hilarion Martinez at his home above the American Consulate. During the course of our discussion, he stated that

although American students widely participate in education programs in Florence and all throughout Italy, it was difficult to get Italian students to come to the U.S. because Italian Universities often do not recognize the credit hours bestowed by American Universities, absent a one on one agreement between the institutions.

Early the next day, we set out to visit the Georgetown campus in the hills above Florence. Upon arrival, we were greeted by Ms. Heidi Flores, the Director of the Georgetown program. The campus is located on a beautiful villa overlooking the whole of Florence, and was established in 1981 when the facility was donated to the university. It has 27 students currently enrolled and 6 faculty. Other similar programs in the area include New York University, Syracuse, Smith College, California State, Florida State, Stanford, and the Universities of Michigan and Wisconsin.

We asked them who it was that we could talk to about producing a reciprocal agreement between the U.S. and Italy which would seek to recognize credits equally. The Minister of Universities was identified as the appropriate individual. He could give substantial background information regarding the problem.

During my visit at the Georgetown campus, we met Cuffe Owens a student and a nephew of my colleague Senator JOE BIDEN.

After returning to the city, we met with Mr. Patrick McCormick, the Director of Communications for the UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre on Piazza SS. Annunziata. Mr. McCormick gave me a brief on the activities of his center which was founded in 1988 "to strengthen the research capability of the United Nations Children's Fund, UNICEF, and to support its advocacy for children worldwide." We touched on several areas including an ongoing study in West Africa on trafficking in children, religious persecution in the Sudan and child protection. His firsthand accounts of children as young as five being used as soldiers and camp slaves in Sierra Leone were quite troubling. His organization continues to push for the education of young children which they see "as central to poor countries economic well-being."

After leaving UNICEF's Research Center, we participated in a press conference at the Florence City Hall, Palazzo Vecchio, regarding a joint effort between Italian Police and Microsoft in Livorno, Italy, in which a large counterfeiting operation was uncovered. Attending were representatives of Microsoft, and local government officials.

At the news conference, the Microsoft representatives stated that counterfeiting was most prevalent in Tuscany so they had started a law enforcement action in Florence. They said

that the reproduction or cloning was so good that it took Microsoft experts some 15 minutes to tell the difference between a counterfeit product and a genuine product. They also stated that they had located in the past year in Europe some 25 million Microsoft counterfeit products on the market at a loss of 1.7 billion dollars.

According to Microsoft, the national (Italy) rate for illegal/counterfeit Microsoft sales was in the 31-37 percent category. In Brescia, the illegal reproduction was 65 percent before passage of the copyright law in 1999, and have since been reduced to 29 percent. The law provides for fines and a jail sentence and also has provisions for search and entry. There have been some efforts to apply the copyright infringements to internet apparently to online sales.

We had an opportunity to discuss with the attorneys whether there had been any criminal prosecutions brought under the new law. They responded with a lengthy description of the process. Apparently, there had been no criminal prosecutions. We then asked if there had been a use of the search and entry law, and he said that they had one such case where counterfeit products had been transported from Singapore to Holland to Milan. The Microsoft experts aided the police in the search and entry, helping to identify counterfeit products.

In Israel, we met with Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, former Prime Minister Ehud Barak and Foreign Minister Shimon Peres. Our first meeting was with Mr. Peres whom I first met in Tel Aviv in 1980 and have seen him on many occasions since, both in the United States and in Israel.

Minister Peres was in good spirits, displayed his great sense of humor, proceeded to give a comprehensive discourse on the state of affairs in the Mideast, and to respond to our questions. Minister Peres started our conversation by saying that terrorism was as un-American as communism used to be. The topic of conversation on our minds was the escalating violence on the border with Gaza, and the northern border with Lebanon. Peres was firm in his conviction that when the time to negotiate comes, everything must be on the table, no impositions on the Israelis, and no impositions on the Palestinians.

Peres then asked me to explain to Palestinian Authority Chairman Arafat whom I was scheduled to meet later in the trip, that some of Sharon's words are very tough, but that the Israelis have several guiding principles. They will respect signed agreements as long as both sides respect them. Israel, he said, is ready to make painful compromises for peace, including redeployment in the territories. He also added that the final proposal offered under former President Clinton is dead since

he left office. He stated that he thought it was a big mistake on Arafat's part not to accept that deal.

Peres stated that it is currently very hard to negotiate because of all the anger. Arafat's delivering of "impossible" speeches only makes it more difficult as well. His view is that the Palestinians think Israelis are militarily harsh in the territories, and that in order to move forward, a different climate must be created there. The best thing that could happen is to change the conditions there. The answer for the Palestinians is not the battlefield, but the bargaining table—as it has historically been.

I asked Minister Peres whether Arafat could control terrorism. He replied he could do a lot by making a strong and unambiguous declaration against it, and prevent the police force participation in the violence. Minister Peres stated that the current situation was not one of absolutes, except that the Israelis seek absolute effort. The first expression of that effort is an unambiguous, unconditional and strong statement rejecting violence delivered in Arabic.

Following our meeting with Foreign Minister Peres, we walked a block to a meeting with former Prime Minister Ehud Barak. I had first met the former Prime Minister when he was just out of the army, and starting to become active in labor politics, perhaps five or six years ago. I have met him on several occasions subsequently, including his visit to the White House in July 2000 where President and Mrs. CLINTON hosted a large dinner in his office in his honor, in a big tent on the South Lawn.

Mr. Barak was also in good spirits considering the strenuous campaign, his recent election defeat, and the difficult negotiations and tenure as Prime Minister. The former Prime Minister spoke at length about his extensive three-way discussions involving President Clinton, Arafat and himself. He spoke about, as he put it, his "contemplation" as to what might have been encompassed in a settlement, but emphasized that none of the discussions about Jerusalem or the concessions on land were final offers until the entire deal was complete.

I told him that I had met in Washington several weeks ago with the Egyptian Foreign Minister who said he knew I had a trip planned to the Mideast and urged me to meet with Arafat. I told him I would consider it. When President Mubarak was in Washington in early April, he also urged me to meet with Arafat and I agreed to do so providing the meeting took place in Cairo. In my discussions with President Mubarak, I had anticipated his being present during my meeting with Arafat. As it worked out, Mubarak was not in Cairo for my scheduled meeting with Arafat. His deputy Osama El-Baz joined me in the meeting.

The former Prime Minister stated that he thought it would be very useful for me to meet with Arafat, so Arafat would understand the thinking of a member of the Senate. I asked Mr. Barak about the prospects for the peace process from this point forward and he said he thought it would be very difficult for the immediate future. He emphasized that he had great admiration, respect and friendship for Prime Minister Sharon whom he has known for decades, and emphasized he would do anything in his power to help the new Prime Minister.

Mr. Barak asked me about Israel's standing in the United States. I replied that U.S. Congressional support for Israel was continuing, and I thought that the new Bush Administration would similarly be very favorably disposed. We talked about the evenly divided Senate, and he was very interested to know about our recent budget battle and the significant role played by Vice President CHENEY. He asked about the economy which we then discussed at some length.

Upon leaving my discussion with former Prime Minister Barak, I met with Ambassador Uri Lubrani, the Lebanon Coordinator for the government of Israel at the Ministry of Defense Headquarters. Joining us was the former Foreign Minister to Iran, Zidma Divon, Deputy Director General of the Foreign Ministry, and John Scott, Counselor for Political Affairs at the American Embassy. They expressed real concern with Iran's backing of the Hezbollah movement in South Lebanon. During the course of our discussion about Iran, Ambassador Lubrani showed me a quote from a report of a British Ambassador to Tehran in the sixties, at the end of his tour of duty: "The Iranians are people who say the opposite of what they think and do the opposite of what they say. That does not necessarily mean that what they do does not confirm to what they think."

After our meeting with Ambassador Lubrani, we drove from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem where we met the next morning with Prime Minister Ariel Sharon. Also in attendance was Binyamin Ben-Eliezer, the Minister of Defense, and Daniel Ayalon, the Foreign Policy Advisor to the Prime Minister.

Our meeting was conducted with a backdrop of an escalating conflict. During the previous evening, Israeli planes had bombed a Syrian radar installation in Lebanon in retaliation for the actions of Hezbollah in south Lebanon. I started my conversation with the Prime Minister by noting that the Egyptian Foreign Minister had asked me to talk to Chairman Arafat. Prime Minister Sharon wasted no time in delivering his message. The policy of the Israeli government would be to draw a distinction between the civilian population and terrorists, supporters of ter-

rorists and instigators. He stated that he plans to ease the conditions in the territories. And at the time, he stated he was ready to show flexibility except in one area, under no circumstances will he be flexible with the security of the Israeli citizens.

Although Sharon did express some willingness to negotiate, it was clear that in his eyes the plan pushed by President Clinton in his waning days in office is dead. "Peace is more painful than war," he said, "because you have to make concessions for peace." "I have a true desire to move the process forward, not the process that has already failed." No negotiations would occur, Sharon assured me, under the "threats of terror." The violence must stop. The Prime Minister noted the violence occurring in Gaza, and stated that the violence could not continue. The Israelis wouldn't accept it. "We are very much interested in stability in the Middle East, but we are not going to pay for it. We have the natural right to exist and defend ourselves."

I told Sharon that we were planning on driving from Damascus to Beirut as part of our trip. He said the current situation that exists in south Lebanon, is not what was contemplated by the withdrawal agreement. Hezbollah wasn't supposed to occupy the positions they currently hold.

Sharon then stated that Iranian influence continued to grow in the area, with the approval of Syria. "Iran is building an independent center of international terror, which could not have been done without the support of Syria. Syria could have stopped them."

Sharon then noted that the actions of the previous evening in bombing the Syrian facility was a warning to Syria. He wanted to send a signal that Israel would not accept the possibility of Israeli soldiers being killed in Israel. Negotiations do not currently exist with Syria. First must come the Palestinian question. "Israel can't negotiate on two fronts when peace requires painful concessions."

Our talk concluded with Prime Minister Sharon noting that the immediate threat to stability in the region remained Tehran, and that only the United States could lead the anti-terror struggle in the free world.

After our meeting with Sharon, we flew to Cairo, Egypt and at approximately 6 p.m., had a meeting with Dr. Osama el-Baz, advisor to President Mubarak. Dr. el-Baz and I talked at some length about the current situation in the Middle East, the U.S. role, and about my meeting with Chairman Arafat later that evening. During that meeting, some issues arose as to U.S. intelligence questions, so I called CIA Director George Tenet in Washington to get the current status report.

Dr. el-Baz arranged a boat ride and dinner for us on the Nile river where we met with a variety of Cairo's lead-

ing citizens including journalists, professionals, businessmen and industrialists. I was questioned about why the U.S. continued to support Israel when Israel has responded with disproportionate force to the actions of the Palestinians. I responded that the U.S. was trying to carry out the Camp David Accords in which their great President Anwar Sadat had invested so much time and effort, and that Israel had agreed to discuss peace once the violence had stopped.

Shortly before 10:30 p.m., we arrived at Chairman Arafat's guest house. After meeting quite a number of his colleagues Dr. el-Baz, Chairman Arafat and Arafat's chief deputy, Saeb Erakat and I went upstairs to a private room so we could have, as Osama el-Baz said, a tête-à-tête. Arafat and Erakat were visibly disturbed about the status of the violence between Israel and the Palestinian Authority. They were especially distressed because, as they told us immediately upon our arrival, Israel was taking forceful military action against Gaza as we spoke.

During the course of our discussion which lasted more than an hour, we were interrupted six or eight times by Arafat's men who came in and handed Arafat written messages. Arafat spoke in Arabic which was interpreted by Erakat on detailing the action being taken by Israeli military with helicopters and missiles.

Arafat and Erakat described the situation as very serious recounting the number of Arabs who had been killed and wounded and then reciting the number of Israeli casualties which showed a much larger number of Arab casualties. Erakat was especially fervent in pleading for some help as to a way to break the impasse.

After a considerable discussion, I said that I would venture a possible approach which was not a recommendation because I thought that would not be appropriate. I then said that one approach might be for Arafat to make a public statement that the cycle of violence was untenable, and that while he would much prefer to have a joint statement made by Sharon and himself with a schedule on a comprehensive approach, he would make a unilateral statement directing all Palestinians to stop any acts of violence. I said to Arafat that the instruction to stop any acts of violence would be in accordance with his famous letter of September 9, 1993 which was the inducement for Prime Minister Rabin and Peres to meet with Arafat at the White House on September 13, 1993. In that letter Arafat renounced the use of violence and said he would take disciplinary action against any of his people who violated his direction.

Arafat then said that he had said all the things that I had mentioned. Erakat then said that not only had Arafat made these statements in a

speech at the Arab summit, but that Shimon Peres had asked Arafat to make these statements from his own lips, and that Arafat had done so.

Dr. Osama el-Baz and I both stated that we had not heard any such statement. If any such statement was ever made, it was doubtless in a long speech and was followed or preceded by many conditions.

I told Arafat that there was considerable anti-Palestinian Authority sentiment in the Congress with some 87 members of the Senate and over 200 members of the House writing a letter urging action that the Palestinian Authority be ousted from its Washington offices.

At one point I asked Arafat why he had not accepted the very generous offer from Barak on territorial concessions on the West Bank and significant concessions on Jerusalem. Arafat replied that he had accepted that offer on a number of occasions including his meeting with President Clinton at the White House. Again, Arafat's statement did not comport with the facts since he had imposed so many conditions.

I said that my staff and I had met with Prime Minister Sharon earlier that day and that Sharon had said, among other things, that peace was more painful than war because in peace you had to make concessions. I thought from that, it was apparent that Sharon was interested in peace talks.

Erakat commented that he had expected a call from an Israeli contact. I told Erakat that I would call the contact which I did the next day. When I telephoned Erakat later in the day, he confirmed that the Israeli contact had called him.

I further told Arafat that Sharon had told me earlier in the day that he was prepared to allow Palestinians to come into Israel for work providing there was no security risks. Sharon had specified that he was not doing this in exchange for anything from the Palestinian Authority because he did not want it viewed that Israel was making concession or buying peace in any way.

I asked Arafat if there was any substance to the contention that the Palestinians had been firing out of Gaza into Israel. Arafat replied that he did have a report of three such mortar shots, but that as soon as Arafat found out about it, he had ordered it stopped with the people doing the shooting to be arrested. In the course of the next several days there was repeated mortar shelling into Israel by Palestinians. Contrary to Arafat's assertions, our intelligence sources advised he had authorized the shelling.

From Cairo, we departed for Beirut by way of Damascus. Climbing up the mountains on the way to Beirut, we passed the location of the Syrian Radar site that Israeli forces destroyed in a

raid just a few days earlier. The U.S. Embassy compound in Beirut is the most heavily fortified embassy in the world. Standing in the middle of the compound, as a stark reminder, are the remains of the prior Embassy that was destroyed by a bomb.

While remaining in the compound overnight, we received an in-depth briefing on the current situation in Beirut and Lebanon, with insight provided by Ambassador David Satterfield, and his Deputy Chief of Mission David Hale. As Ambassador Satterfield pointed out, Lebanon was very badly divided because of its charter (its form of a constitution) which divided authority between three Lebanese factions. He commented about how Beirut had the potential to regain its status as "Paris of the Mideast," but that there would have to be major economic reforms. He also commented that the Prime Minister Rafik Hariri had been discussing with the World Bank and International Monetary Fund about ways to get financing which could lead to a revitalization of Beirut. Satterfield also noted that Hezbollah was a very strong force in Southern Lebanon, with only a few hundred fighters.

Beirut still shows the scars of its savage civil war with its once beautiful hotels reduced to shells. There is a rebuilding effort, however, and its central business district has been rebuilt to some extent.

We drove back from Beirut to Damascus. Ambassador Ryan Crocker hosted a dinner for visiting Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs Edward Walker and our party. We had a wide-ranging conversation about the current state of affairs in the Mideast. I reported on our trip to Beirut, which Ambassador Ryan noted with some interest as he was the Ambassador to Beirut when our embassy was last bombed.

The next morning we met with Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shara and Deputy Foreign Minister Walid al-Mu'allim. At the start of our meeting we discussed my last visit to Syria, which was for President Assad's funeral. I told Foreign Minister Shara that my fellow Senators were very interested in Syria, and then mentioned that I had just been to see Chairman Arafat in Egypt. I discussed my recent travels in the area, and related that everyone would like the violence to stop. The Foreign Minister asked me what Israel was seeking, and I told him of my discussions with Prime Minister Sharon, who stated that he is determined to avoid Israeli loss of life and will act accordingly. I also told him that the Israelis intended to ease up on the borders as long as there were no threats to security; the Israeli government position was that all the violence must stop prior to any talks taking place. I then encouraged him to talk to the Israelis.

Foreign Minister Shara said I had persuaded Syria, or perhaps, more accurately been a factor, to enter into negotiations with Israel in my numerous discussions with former President Hafez al-Assad during the 1980's and 1990's. I had first visited Damascus in 1984 and had met with President Assad almost every year from 1988 to 1998. Minister Shara stated that only after beginning discussions with the Israelis did it become apparent that they didn't want peace. I reminded him that both sides came very close on the Golan and that a dialogue must continue.

Our attention then turned to Iraq, China and recent American politics as well as efforts to exchange Parliamentarians with Iran.

We left Damascus and flew into Souda Bay, Crete, which houses the U.S. Naval Support Activity Souda Bay, and Fleet Air Reconnaissance Squadron Two, VQ-2, a unit responsible for reconnaissance missions for the Mediterranean, and which is the counterpart to the unit that was involved in the recent mishap with a Chinese pilot in international waters off the coast of China.

I was met by Captain Steve Hoefel, the Base Commanding Officer and was set up in quarters for the night. That night, Rear Admiral Steve Tomaszewski, the Commander of the Mediterranean Air Fleet, flew in for a brief to be held the next morning.

On Friday, April 20, we received a classified brief on the mission of the base and its reconnaissance aircraft. The base's main responsibility is to support and resupply the forward-deployed Navy and Marine Corps forces. It has the largest fuel storage facility, largest ammo storage facility and the deepest port in the Mediterranean, and is strategically located near the Mideast.

We toured the base, and the port facility located nearby. A large amount of construction was occurring on the dock with the installation of new facilities designed to give sailors and Marines all the amenities of home when they dock. I was pleased to find two Pennsylvanians among the many Navy Construction Battalion sailors working on the structures.

We also had the opportunity to tour an EP-3 aircraft similar to that which remains in China, and were briefed on the various station's responsibilities during flight operations, as well as talk to several of the crew members. We also had the opportunity to see an E3 AWACS on the runway.

From Crete we flew to Rome where we received a brief by the Chargé d'Affaires William Pope, and Margaret Dean, Minister-Counselor for Economic Affairs. We discussed the effect of the European Union on NATO, reviewed the current areas of work for the embassy, and the effect of the strong U.S. dollar on tourism. In addition, I briefed

them on parts of my visit to Florence including our meeting with the attorneys for Ferragamo, and our visit to the Georgetown campus.

Margaret Dean was familiar with the case that the Ferragamo attorneys had told us about in which a person purchased counterfeit goods at such a low price that the judiciary reasoned the purchaser could not have believed the goods to be authentic, and therefore found no fraud in the sale. She stated that often, because of that case, sellers of counterfeit goods often go so far to label the goods as "fake" to avoid prosecution.

The Embassy reported that it doesn't have anyone overriding area that it concentrates on. It has several areas of concentration which include tourism, trade disputes, military issues, and the Mideast situation. Chargé d'Affaires Pope reported that Italy had changed a lot and had become a fairly different place in the last decade. He reported a recent high-tech emphasis that has helped propel the country's economy to the 6th largest in the world. The country has also benefitted from the increase in tourism generated by the strong American dollar.

On April 21, we flew from Rome to Philadelphia.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a "Commentary" on the mideast peace process.

There being no objection; the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Philadelphia Inquirer, Apr. 27, 2001]

**MIDEAST PEACE PROCESS MUST RESUME**  
(By U.S. Sen. Arlen Specter)

Escalating violence has deadened the Middle East peace process. As usual, all sides look to the United States to influence the parties to end the violence and resume the quest for peace.

In mid-April, at the request of Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, I met with Palestinian Chairman Yasir Arafat in Cairo. When I arrived for our 10:30 p.m. meeting, Arafat said that as we spoke, Israeli helicopters and missiles were attacking Palestinians in Gaza. He did not mention that the Israeli action was in retaliation for mortars fired into Israel earlier that day.

Our discussion, which lasted until nearly midnight, was interrupted every few moments by aides bringing him the latest dispatch on the fighting. I told Arafat I was convinced Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon would not resume the peace process until the violence ended.

Since the sequence of events demonstrated that Israel was responding to Palestinian provocation, it was up to Arafat to demonstrate his best efforts to stop the violence. After all, it was Arafat's famous letter of Sept. 9, 1993, that induced then-Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Foreign Minister Shimon Peres to shake Arafat's hand at their historic meeting with President Clinton on the White House lawn four days later. In that letter, Arafat renounced violence and promised to punish any Palestinian who violated that commitment.

Arafat responded that he had made an unequivocal declaration at the recent Arab summit. When his statement was examined, it was obvious it was so conditional as to be meaningless. I then asked Arafat why he had rejected former Prime Minister Ehud Barak's generous settlement offer on major concessions on Jerusalem and additional territory on the West Bank. Arafat said he had accepted the Barak proposal. Again, on examination, there were so many ifs, ands and buts that his response was meaningless. Our meeting ended with no realistic hope that any significant action could be expected from Arafat.

The situation was equally bleak when I traveled on to Beirut and Damascus. Hezbollah, backed by Iran and Syria, had continued to attack Israeli border settlements from Southern Lebanon, leading Israel to bomb Syrian radar. Beirut once touted as the Paris of the Middle East, has not recovered from Lebanon's civil war because of factional quarrels and Syria's continuing dominance of the country.

In Damascus, Syria's foreign minister Farouk Shara agreed with Sharon that Israeli-Syrian peace talks on the Golan Heights would be pointless at this time. Before President Hafez al-Assad's death, the parties had come very close to a settlement but were now back to square one.

Notwithstanding the bleak prospects, the Bush administration, aided by Congress, must push the parties back to the bargaining table. There is no doubt that the countries involved listen to Uncle Sam. When Secretary of State Colin Powell criticized Sharon's tough retaliation as "excessive and disproportionate," Israel modified its tactics.

Congress has spoken emphatically: 87 senators and 209 House members wrote on April 6 to the President calling for the closing of the Palestinian office in Washington if the Palestinians did not stop inciting violence. I have urged President Bush to appoint a special envoy for the Middle East just as President Richard Nixon used Henry Kissinger for shuttle diplomacy and Presidents Jimmy Carter, Ronald Reagan, George H.W. Bush and Bill Clinton assigned envoys such as Dennis Ross to the peace process. President Bush may soon find it necessary to become personally involved like his predecessors.

The escalation of Israeli-Palestinian violence may encourage other terrorist groups, such as Hamas and Islamic Jihad, to attack not only Tel Aviv and Jerusalem, but also U.S. interests around the world. The peace process cannot be abandoned; one way or another, a way must be found for Israelis and Palestinians to live together on that tiny parcel of hallowed and historic land. Our vital national interests in the region make it imperative that the United States actively pursue a resumption of the Middle East peace process.

**IN APPRECIATION OF ALYCE AND JACK BERGGREN**

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I appreciate the opportunity today to honor two very special people from my hometown of Aberdeen, SD. Alyce and Jack Berggren have contributed tirelessly to the arts of South Dakota, and I am blessed to call Alyce and Jack my long-time friends.

Alyce Bedrosian grew up in Chicago in an Armenian family. After earning a

masters degree in piano from Northwestern University, she was hired by Northern State Teachers College in 1947. Though she carried a return train ticket from her concerned father, Alyce decided to remain in South Dakota. She never used the ticket.

Jack Berggren's boyhood was spent a world away in Scottsbluff, a small town in western Nebraska. He studied voice at Hastings College in Hastings, NE, and came to Northern State University in Aberdeen in 1949. There, he met Alyce, and they began performing together. In Jack's own words, he married his "accompanist" in 1950.

For almost half a century, the Berggrens have touched the lives of countless NSU students and music lovers of the northern plains. "Dr. B.," as his students affectionately call him, taught voice, directed choirs and served as the NSU Dean of Fine Arts. His annual Messiah performances rekindle fond memories among many Aberdonians. Alyce continues to define excellence in piano performance and teaching, regularly accompanying students to this day.

Over two decades ago, friends, faculty, alumni and students surprised the Berggrens with a musical thank you. In 1978, to honor both Jack and Alyce, their community sponsored "The Gala Concert for the benefit of the Northern State College Music Department." In addition to NSU music students and faculty, the concert included the Aberdeen Barbershop Chorus and the Elks Chorus.

Gala II was held in 1989, and this year, May 5, marks the third Gala concert. I am pleased to know that the Johnson Fine Arts Center will once again display the talents of those touched by the Berggrens. I only regret that I cannot be there in person to enjoy the event and the company of Jack and Alyce. Instead, I hope this statement will serve as my small contribution and a symbol of immense gratitude to Jack and Alyce for their contributions to the musical arts in South Dakota.

**TRIBUTE TO KATHRYN COLE**

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to a very special person in South Dakota who has dedicated many years to the Northern Black Hills' Retired Seniors Volunteer Program.

Today, the directors and volunteers of this RSVP program will gather at their annual recognition banquet to celebrate the dedication and hard work of Kathryn Cole, who is retiring from this RSVP community after 21 years of service. In fact, for 20 of those years, Kathryn served as the director of this important program.

The generous gift of Kathryn Cole's time and experience has benefitted